

The Muse.

THE WORLD FOR SALE.

BY REV. RALPH ROY.

Call every traveler here to see me—
Who'll buy this little globe of mine?
And set me free from earth's bondage?
'Tis going—'tis going—'tis going—
The world for sale, the world for sale!
I'll sell it whatso'er it bring—
The world at auction here today!

It is a glorious thing to see—
Ah! it has cheered me no more!
For sales—it shall be mine no more.
Come, turn it over and sell it well—
I would not have you purchase here—
'Tis going—'tis going—'tis going—
Who'll buy the little globe of mine?

Here's wealth in glittering gold—
Who'll buy the little globe of mine?
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It was freely admitted that this would certainly cause the aspect of affairs. But if members preferred renting to buying, nothing could be done.

"They ought to be made to buy," said S—, warmly. "There is Preston, worth thirty or forty thousand dollars at least, instead of paying a couple of thousand dollars for the pew his family occupies, is very well content to get it at a yearly rent of a hundred dollars. It is too bad! I would not give much for his interest in religion, if he has no better way of showing it."

"He certainly ought to buy," was unhesitatingly replied.

"He shall buy!" said S—, snapping his fingers, as a sudden thought struck him.

"Do you think you can make him?"

"Yes."

"How? What means will you use?"

"Never mind about that. But, mark my words for it, next Sunday Preston will be the owner instead of the mere tenant of his pew."

"I hope so."

"You shall not hope in vain."

The lawyer went to his office and sat down to think. After about half an hour's cogitation, he said, aloud, "Yes, he's the man."

And immediately writing a note, despatched it by his office messenger. In twenty minutes a well-dressed man entered, and bowed to the lawyer with a respectful, or rather, deferential air.

"Take a chair, Jones—I want to talk to you," said S—.

The man seated himself.

"You know we've managed to get comfortably in debt with our new church."

"Yes; so it seems," was the assenting reply.

"And some how or other, we must manage to get out of debt."

"If we can."

"Well, I think we can, if the thing is done right. I believe I have hit upon the mode."

"Ah! Well, you are fortunate. Nobody else could have done it."

"So I flatter myself. But my trade makes me a little sharper than common people, you know. There are too many pews rented. If all who are able to buy would purchase instead of renting, the debt would be paid off in a week."

"No doubt of that."

"Very well. That is admitted. Now my plan is to make them buy."

"If I can."

"And you, with a good fellow like you to aid me. And I think your affection for the church is strong enough to induce you to lend a willing hand to the debt. Debt is a terrible thing."

"Indeed it is! But how can I aid?"

"Are you willing?"

"Oh, certainly."

"Very well. Then, without any body's knowing what we are about, or suspecting any concert between us, we can make some forty or fifty new pew-renters become purchasers, and thus pay the whole debt."

"How? How? I am curious to know that?"

"Very well, I will inform you. There is Preston to begin with. His pew is a very eligible one, and if he gives it up, he can't possibly get another without going far down the aisle; for every good pew in the church is either rented or sold. Now his pew is worth at least two thousand dollars."

"Yes, and he ought to pay that for it. He is able enough."

"So I think. Very well. Now I will place two thousand dollars in your hands, and do you go to the treasurer who has charge of the matter, and offer to buy the pew, saying that you are ready to pay the price for it, cash. He will, of course, tell you that he must see Preston first, and give him the option of buying it. And Preston, rather than let you have the pew, will buy. D'ye see?"

"Capital! It's the very thing!"

"Isn't it?"

"Yes; you sent a lawyer, dyed in the wool, there's no mistake," said the man, leaning back in his chair, and giving vent to a hearty burst of laughter.

"I consider myself hard to beat in any thing," returned S—. "But will you join me in the matter?"

"Certainly. I'm ready to serve the church in any way that an humble individual like me can do it."

On the next Sabbath, Preston set in his own pew, sure enough; and the treasury of the church was in a better condition by just the sum of two thousand dollars. S— was delighted at the success of his scheme, and tried it on two other pew-renters, with the same result. During the week, and with the desired result. Jones got some private abuse for his part of the business, and was told that he had better pay his honest debt before he undertook to buy a high priced pew; but he put it all quietly in his pocket and went ahead.

"You are determined to have somebody's pew, I see," remarked the treasurer, when Jones appeared the fourth time.

"I wish a good pew, and an willing to pay a good price for it," he replied. "I don't covet anybody's pew. But I believe no one has a right to the property he merely rents."

"Oh, no. You have a right to purchase any unoccupied pew in the church."

"So I suppose."

But Jones did not get the pew for which he had offered a liberal price. The occupant refused in charge, that they ought to have a new and more imposing edifice than the one they worshipped in, which was to say the truth, rather an ancient affair, and by no means such as the wealth of the congregation entitled them to have. S— was prominent in the matter—in fact, he was the prime mover, and headed a subscription list with a thousand dollars.

In due time the church was finished, and an elegant edifice it was. When the building was projected and plans called for, sixty thousand dollars was to be the maximum of cost. But the building committee and the architect managed to run the cost up to a hundred thousand dollars, and the church in debt about seventy thousand. This caused all concerned to feel, as might be supposed, rather serious on the subject. A debt of seventy thousand dollars was rather a serious affair viewed in any light.

The first thing to be done was to have a sale of the pews. The proceeds were rather slowly, and the prices at which they sold were by no means as large as had been anticipated. From this source only twenty thousand dollars came. An extra subscription was then tried, but only ten thousand dollars could be raised.

In this aspect of affairs, S—, who was chairman of the building committee, and to whom was mainly chargeable the excess of cost over the first estimate made for the church, felt called upon to devise some means of liquidating the heavy debt.

"It could be done easily enough, if those who are able could come forward and buy pews at fair prices instead of renting them," he said to a fellow vestryman.

"Nettled, because his dull brains" were not bright enough for such a scheme.

That there was some stir in the church when it became known what work the lawyer had been engaged in, may well be supposed. Some were angry, some laughed at the trick, but all were more or less satisfied with being out of debt. The reputation of S— as a professional man did not suffer; though we believe, on the score of his pious there were some doubts entertained in the minds of a few, who considered him a lawyer dyed in the wool, and therefore a hopeless case.

GOING INTO MORNING.

A few weeks since, our friend Clark was lying sick with bilious fever. The attack was severe, and he believed that death was near. One morning he awoke from a short sleep to hear a hurried and smothered conversation in the adjoining room in which his wife took part. The first words that Clark caught were uttered by his better-half—

"On that ground," said she, "I object to mourning!"

"Yes," replied another, "but the world looks for it; it is fashionable, and one might as well be out of the world as out of the fashion."

"Very true!"

"Here," thought Clark, "is a nice wife. She thinks I am about to die—to be planted, if I may use the expression, in the cold earth, and yet she refuses to go into mourning for me. Ah! me!"

"Now that I am here, perhaps I had better take your measure."

"The unfeeling wretch!" exclaimed Clark, "to think of sending for a dress-maker before I am dead! But I'll cheat her yet! I'll live for spite!"

"Well," mused the wife, "I believe you may measure me. I will let you buy the trimming, and let it be gay as possible."

"What heartlessness!" groaned Clark. "Woman-like, though. One husband is no sooner dead than they set about entrapping another. I can scarcely credit it."

"Of course you will have a dounce!"

"Two of them; and as the body is to be plain, I wish you to get wide gimp trim to it."

"How will you have the sleeves trimmed?"

"With buttons and fringe."

"Well—this beats all," sighed poor Clark.

"When do you want the dress?" enquired the mantua-maker.

"I must have it in three days. My husband will then be off my hands, and I shall be able to go out!"

"Oh! horrible—horrible!" ejaculated the sick man, "I am only half dead, but this blow will kill me!"

His wife heard him speak, and ran quickly to his bedside.

"Did you speak, my dear?" said she, with the voice of an angel.

"I have heard it all, madam," replied Clark.

"All what, my dear?"

"The mourning—gay dresses—fringe—everything. Oh! Maria—Maria!"

"You rave!"

"Do you take me for a fool?"

"Certainly not, my dear."

"You expect me to be out of the way in three days, do you?"

"Yes, love; the doctor said you would be well in that time."

"What means the dress?"

"It is the one you bought for me before you were taken sick."

"But you were speaking of mourning?"

"My wife talking of mourning. My wife! My wife!"

"Oh, is that it?"

"Yes, love. You know she is poor, and her family is large, and it must inconvenience her very much to find mourning for them all. On this ground alone, I oppose it."

"So—so—that's it, is it? I thought you were speaking of me, and it distressed me. Let me beg you to be more careful for the future."

Clark was out in three days, and he now laughs at the matter, which then appeared so horrible.

BLACK-EYED JOE.

Two or three years ago I went into a town in the State of New Hampshire, to give a temperance lecture. There were many persons in the village who drank intoxicating liquors. But many came to hear me, and I noticed, just as I commenced speaking, a little black-eyed boy, just about seven years of age, who came into the hall and sat down near the door. He listened very attentively; and when I spoke of the cruel treatment of wives and children from intemperate men, I saw him more than once take his handkerchief and wipe away the tears. I told them the pledge would prevent all this, and make men kind and pleasant; and I told the children to sign it if they would prosper, and be happy in the world. This little fellow was almost the first to put his name down; and when I asked him who he was, he told me he was called Black-eyed Joe, and that his father was one of the worst drunkards in town.

It was his custom every morning to mingle rum and sugar with water, and pass it round to every one of the children, who took a little as well as their father and mother. He would again at eleven o'clock, at noon time, at four o'clock, and at supper, so that when evening came he would always be intoxicated, cruel and revengeful; sometimes he would beat his wife, and sometimes his children, or shut them out of doors in cold storms. It was this that made Joseph weep when I told of the cruelty to children, and it was this that induced him to sign the pledge.

He went home from the meeting and determined to keep his resolution. The next morning, as usual, the father took out the brown jug, mixed the pitcher of poison, and handed it to Joseph first. He shook his head and declined taking it.

"Drink, Joe," said his father.

"I do not wish any again sir," replied Joseph.

His father looked at him for a moment; and then said, roughly—"Did you go to that temperance meeting, Joe?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you sign the pledge?"

"Yes, sir."

"What did you do that for, Joe?"

"Because, father, said Joe hesitatingly, "if ever I am a man, I do not wish to be as you are."

His father blushed, turned pale, stood confused a moment, and then opened the door, and dashed both jug and pitcher to pieces, saying—

"You shall have a father that you won't be ashamed to be like."

From that hour he has never taken any thing that can intoxicate; and is happy himself, and renders his family happy besides; and I will venture to say that Joseph will have an answer ready for any one who asks him, "what good will it do to sign the pledge?"

[Exchange paper.]

STORY OF THE BELL.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY CLARA CUMMANS.

(Ever and anon a heavy sigh makes one acquaintance by chance. The little things which please us much are not obtained by direct search—we find them when they are least expected, and where they are not supposed to be. Such a wife is the following. We have read many of feeling, instructive and moral little efforts, but certainly none to surpass this. Its quiet pathos, the motive with which it is impregnated, the beautiful and pious tone, (points without being forced) in which it is clothed, and the still evident in its construction, render it a true gem; and we trust none of our readers will pass it by unnoticed. Noth's Messenger.)

The village was small, and the church was not a cathedral, but a quiet, unostentatious, stone chapel, half covered by climbing plants, and a forest of dark trees round it. They shaded the interior so completely in the summer afternoons, that the figure of the altar piece—painted, the villagers avowed, by Albrecht Dürer—could scarcely be distinguished, and rested upon the broad canvas a mass of shadowy outlines.

A quiet carved belfry rose above the trees, and in the bright dawn of the Sabbath a chime sweet and holy floated from it, calling the villagers to their devotions; but the bell whose iron tongue gave forth that chime was not the bell that my story speaks of; there was another, long before that was cast, that had hung for years, perhaps a century, in the same place. But now it is no longer elevated; its tongue is mute, for it lies upon the ground at the foot of the church tower, and broken and rusted, it is half buried in the rich mould, and there are green stains creeping over it, eating into its iron heart, no one heeds it now, for those who had brought it there are sleeping coldly and silently all around in the church-yard. The shadow of these dark trees rests on many graves.

How came the old bell to be thus neglected? A new generation arose—

"See," they said, "the church where our parents worshipped falls to decay. Its towers crumble to dust. The bell has lost its silver tone—it is cracked, it is broken. We will have a new tower, and another bell shall call us to our worship."

So the old belfry was destroyed, and the old bell lay at the foundation. It was grieved at the cruel sentence, but it scorned to complain; it was voiceless.

They came weeks after to remove it—the remains would be of use, but strive as they would, no strength was able to raise the bell. It had grown ponderous—it defied them—rooted to the earth as it seemed.

"They cannot make me leave my post," thought the bell. "I will still watch over this holy spot; it has been my care for years."

Time passed, and they strove no longer to remove the relic. Its successor rang clearly from the tower above his head, and the old bell slumbered on, in the warm sunshine and the dreary storm, unmolested and almost forgotten.

The afternoon was calm, but the sun's rays were most powerful. A bright, noble boy had been walking listlessly under the whispering trees. He was in high health, and was resting from eager exercise, for there was a flush upon his open brow, and as he walked he wiped the beaded drops from his forehead.

"Ah, here is the place," he said; "I will lie down in this cool shade, and read this pleasant volume." So the youth stretched his weary limbs upon the velvet grass, and his head rested near the old bell; but he did not know it, for there was a low shrub with thick serrated leaves and fragrant blossoms spreading over it, and the youth did not care to look beyond.

Presently the letters in his book began to grow indistinct; there was a mist creeping over the page, and while he wondered at the marvel, a low, clear voice spoke to him. Yes, it called his name, "Novalia."

"I am here," said the lad, though he could see no one. He glanced upward and around, yet there was no living creature in sight.

"Listen," said the voice, "I have not spoken to mortal for many years. My voice was hushed at thy birth. Come, I will tell thee of it." The youth listened, though he was awfully amazed. He felt bound to the spot, and he could not close his ears.

"Time has passed swiftly," said the voice, "since I watched the children who are now men and women, at their sports in the neighboring forest. I looked out from my station in the old tower, and morning and evening beheld with joy those innocent faces, as they ran and bounded in wild delight, fearless of the future, and careless of the present hour. They were all my children, for I had rejoiced at their birth; and if it was ordained that the Good Shepherd early called one of the lambs to his bosom, I told not mournfully, but solemnly at the departure. I knew it was far better for those who slept thus peacefully, and I could not sorrow for them."

"I marked one, a fair, delicate girl, who often separated herself from her merry companions. She would leave the noisy play, and stealing with her book and work through the dark old trees, would sit for hours in the shadow of the tower. Though she never came without a volume, such an one as just now you were reading, the book was often neglected; and leaning her head upon it, she would remain until the twilight tenderly veiled her beautiful form, wrapped in a deep, slumbering. I knew that her thoughts were holy and pure—often of Heaven, for she would raise her eyes to the bending sky, jewelled as it was in the evening hour, and seen in prayer, though her lips moved not, and the listening breezes could not catch a murmured word."

"But the girl grew up, innocent as in her childhood; yet with a rosy flush upon her cheeks, and a brighter lustre in her dreamy eye. I did not see her more, then, but when you came on the bright Sabbath morning, playing and laughing, and with the voice of the young who love the good Father to come and thank him for his wondrous mercy and goodness, she was the first to obey the summons; and I watched the snowy drapery which she always wore, as it fluttered by the dark foliage, or gleamed in the glad sunshine. She did not come alone, for her grandeur ever leaned upon her arm, and she guided his uncertain steps, and listened earnestly to the words of wisdom which he spoke. Then I marked that often another joined the group—a youth who had been her companion years ago, when she was a very child. Now they did not stray as then, with arms entwined, and hand linked in hand; but the youth supported the grandeur, and she walked beside him, looking timidly upon the ground, and if by chance he spoke to her, a bright glow would arise on her lips and forehead."

"For many a voice rang out for a merrier bridal than on the morn when they were united, before the altar of the very church. All the village rejoiced with them, for the gentle girl was loved as a sister and a daughter; all said that the youth to whom she had pledged her troth was well worthy of the jewel he had gained. The old priest, and the young admirer, as the bride party turned toward their home, a simple vine shaded cottage, not a stone's throw from where thou art sitting."

"They did not forget the God who bestowed so much happiness on them, even in the midst of pleasure; and often they would come in the hush of twilight, and kneeling by the altar, give thanks for all the mercies they had received."

"Two years—long as the period may seem to youth—glide swiftly past when the heart is not at rest. Then once more a chime floated from the belfry. It was at early dawn, when the mist was lying on the mountain's side, and the dew had trembling in the hare bells, frightened by the first beams of the rising day. A son had been given them, a bright, healthful babe, with eyes blue as the mother's, who clasped him to her breast, and dedicated him with his first breath to the parent who had watched over her orphaned youth, and had given this treasure to her keeping."

"That bright day faded, and even came sadly upon the face of nature. Deep and mournful was the tone which I sang upon the passing wind; and the first trees of the forest sent back a moan from their swaying branches, heavily laden as if for very sympathy. Life was that day given, but another had been recalled. The young mother's sleep was not broken even by the wailing voice of her first-born, for it was the repose of death."